



# ***Central Consolidated School District #22***

Shiprock Administration P.O.Box 1199, Shiprock, New Mexico 87420  
(505) 368-4984 / 598-9684 Fax: (505) 368-5232

## **News Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**From:** Larry Di Giovanni  
505.368.4984 x 360  
Communications Journalist

## **State PED Secretary Garcia praises Shiprock's Mesa Elementary for AYP**

SHIPROCK – During a statewide Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) press conference held Monday, Aug. 1 in Santa Fe, New Mexico Public Education Department Secretary Dr. Veronica C. Garcia described Shiprock's Mesa Elementary School as a Native American success story. It's one example where teachers, students, parents and administrators have collaborated for school success, the Education Secretary said.

Mesa Elementary, a grades 4-6 school with 216 students, made AYP status when results were announced Monday. Students in grades 3-9 and 11 took the statewide tests in math and reading last spring, called the New Mexico Standards Based Assessments.

Garcia commended Mesa Elementary for being a school previously designated as Restructuring II, based on being in school improvement status for a number of years, which has now turned the corner toward continuous improvement. She praised Laguna-Acoma Middle School in tandem with Mesa Elementary.

"Both schools serve 100 percent Native American students and they are all English Language Learners," Garcia said in her remarks. "I congratulate the efforts of the students, parents, teachers, principals, district staff, Superintendents and School Boards at both of these schools for this significant achievement. This is dramatic, as these schools have not met standards or made AYP for at least the past six years. These results are proof positive that we can change the status quo for children in struggling schools and communities."

Garcia continued: "I am thrilled for the schools and their educators, parents, students and communities! Both schools are utilizing a continuous improvement model to deploy their Educational Plan for Student Success, and they will be asked to share their best practices at next year's Closing the Achievement Gap Statewide Conference. With school improvements like these, I know that school communities not meeting AYP this year can, and will, change the status quo at their schools."

Mesa Elementary School Principal Pandora Bidtah credited her teachers and staff, students, parents for their commitment to educational success, and the Central Consolidated School District's adherence to the state-adopted Baldrige Model of Performance Excellence, for the

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AYP result. The staff has worked toward integrating all core subjects – reading, writing, math and science – to state standards. The school has offered the computer-assisted Accelerated Math and Accelerated Reading Programs the past two years, in addition to offering an abundance of supplemental educational services including after-school math and reading programs. Mesa Elementary is implementing a schoolwide writing project this school year, Bidtah said.

Mesa Elementary’s level of parent involvement increased substantially last year through the introduction of quarterly end-of-grading period Pride Days, during which parents cheered on their students -- and their teachers -- for academic performance. Each teacher handed out Pride Awards to their students for such accomplishments as perfect attendance, A-B grades Honor Roll, Physical Education-Fitness, Navajo Language and other categories.

Bidtah also credited the Baldrige Model’s “Systems Check” – where schools use data such as reading scores and satisfaction survey results – for steering Mesa Elementary in the right direction. Baldrige Section 5.1 speaks to community involvement and recognition.

“Section 5.1 is all about staff morale and celebrating your accomplishments, like overall student achievement and recognizing high performers, establishing pride in what you do and even taking care of emotional wellness,” Bidtah said.

One of the new school year’s first activities to establish school rapport will come Aug. 25, during Mesa Elementary’s Meet the Teachers Night that will include an Ice Cream Social.

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Photo: Pandora Bidtah, Principal, Mesa Elementary School, Shiprock



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